



**MINUTES FROM THE WORK SESSION
HELD MARCH 29, 1999, TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED FY99 BUDGET FOR
REVENUES AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT.**

Mayor Davis called the meeting to order at 8:26 p.m.

ROLL CALL was answered by Edward V.J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts, Alan Turnbull, Thomas X. White and by Judith Davis, Mayor.

ALSO PRESENT were Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; Jeff Williams, City Treasurer; and W. Bowman Ferguson, Acting City Clerk. Sheldon Goldberg from GEAC and Diane Oberg from the Greenbelt News Review were also present.

Michael McLaughlin opened with an overview of the budget. He described the likelihood that revenues will not grow significantly in the foreseeable future. He reported that the City is working from a healthy fund balance. He proposed that the drawdown plan would continue. He stated that he believed Council had expressed support for expansion of services and therefore this budget reflects a small expansion. The budget includes a one-time transfer of \$300,000 to the Capital Projects Fund (equivalent to 5.5 cents on the tax rate.) Mr. McLaughlin briefly covered the remaining items in the overview section of the budget.

Jeff Williams then discussed an overview of City revenues. He discussed the major tax revenue sources and mentioned that growth in these areas is very limited. He outlined the pertinent trends in other factors affecting revenue, including changes in local businesses and abatements. Smaller revenue sources were covered briefly, including a proposed increase in inspection fees and a decrease in the refuse fee. Mr. Williams went on to discuss expenditure trends, touching specifically on budgeting changes that will come about due to the new computer system in Finance. Other expenditure trends were covered, including the police computer system, higher recycling costs, and lower insurance costs. Mr. Williams answered a few miscellaneous questions from Council.

Mr. McLaughlin began the discussion of the General Government budget. He first described the list of Council's major achievements in 1999. He also discussed the achievements of Finance and Administration, including Community Promotions. Issues and services for these divisions were also presented. The City Council budget was then presented, and Mr. McLaughlin discussed the proposed objectives for the Council. Administration was discussed next, including changes in salaries and new objectives. Mr. McLaughlin then discussed the Finance budget, first describing changes in the performance measures. He described Greenbelt's credit rating and how our rating is arrived at. He went on to describe minor changes in line items regarding retirement and the Finance computer system.

Mr. McLaughlin next discussed the budget for Legal Counsel. He outlined a proposal to increase the amount of Mr. Manzi's retainer by \$500 a month (\$6,000 per year.) The municipal building budget was presented briefly. Community Promotion's budget was discussed, including a possible partnership to be formed with Greenbelt Access Television. The website was discussed in some detail, and Council asked questions about how the website was being promoted. Public Officers and Associations was discussed last, with some discussion about COG membership and the problems with meeting times. The Mayor collected information on COG attendance by City officials and staff.

The discussion of the budget concluded, Mr. McLaughlin asked Council what their reaction was to the Fraternal Order of Police's letter to the editor in Friday's News Review. Mr. McLaughlin discussed the possibility of having the Chief of Police respond to the article. Mr. Turnbull liked the Chief's proposed letter, but suggested that the letter be submitted under the signature of the Council, the Manager, and the Chief. Mr. Roberts felt that a response would not be beneficial. Mr. White expressed his opinion that the letter from the FOP was not inappropriate, but felt a response from staff might be helpful to clear up factual matters. Council directed staff to submit the letter to the News Review.

The Mayor announced that until we hear from Mr. Manzi, all miscellaneous items will be discussed at the end of work sessions.

The work session ended at 10:26 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

W. Bowman Ferguson